

The Hazelnut



2021 in Review

A City of Tukwila publication for our residential and business communities

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

VOLUME 42, NUMBER 1

Tukwila: The City of Opportunity, the Community of Choice

Mayor's Message



Homeless encampments

As Mayor, I frequently get inquiries or complaints (along with some “thank you’s” – for addressing Tukwila’s homeless encampments. Homelessness impacts the entire community, not just those who are unsheltered. The Tukwila Police

Department partners with the City departments to provide resources and outreach to those experiencing homelessness and clean up unhealthy conditions within the city.

Established by the State of Washington, there is a legal process we follow to ensure the rights of individuals. We have a task force that is made up of Police, Public Works and Human Services personnel, plus community partners that help focus on this need. When a homeless encampment is identified, law enforcement officers are dispatched to make contact with the resident(s) at the location. Most times the Police are accompanied to the encampment by our contracted Mental Health Professional (MHP) to help ascertain the state of the individual, do a welfare check and offer services.

Due to Washington State law, the City cannot force encamped individuals to leave if on non-City-owned property. If a trespass agreement is obtained from the private property owner, then law enforcement can seek their departure, after which a private company or Public Works and PD work together to clean up the abandoned camp. An example is the three vehicle campers that had been located on private property down by Interurban Avenue and 48th Place South. It took several months to obtain the trespass agreement with the property owner, but once done, the individuals departed the site that same week.

In order to ask an encampment to pull up stakes and move on, the City must provide them with information of a place to go. Although not a long-term option, some of our churches have taken in homeless families in need of temporary housing for a day or two. We provide a list of shelters in South King County or Salvation Army contacts, who are helpful for people living out

of RVs and cars. Before displacing people from encampments, it is critical we have a housing alternative available to offer.

For each identified encampment, members of the outreach team visit the camp regularly to discuss their situation and offer them resources. Some folks refuse any assistance, preferring to live ‘remote’. Many Police duties are affected by limited staffing due to covid, retirements and staff vacancies. However, our Tukwila Police Department considers addressing encampments among their highest priorities.

An informative video is coming soon to the Tukwila Tracker site – TukwilaPolice.com – following our Community Police Team (CPT) as they check on homeless encampments throughout the city. The video covers the City’s homeless outreach efforts, case laws, policies and protocols related to encampments, RV parking issues, and interviews with CPT detectives, our MHP, and some of the individuals who they are assisting.

Allan Ekberg
Mayor, City of Tukwila

City's 1998 vision for site completed

On July 30, 2021, Sustainable Housing for Ageless Generations (SHAG) celebrated the grand opening of its fourth apartment building at Tukwila Village. The SHAG-owned property includes 398 apartments, 6 live/work units, commercial office and retail space, the SpiceBridge food hall, the Sullivan Center and plaza. The King County Library System owns and built the Tukwila Library, which opened in 2017.



The City of Tukwila started the Tukwila Village project in 1998. The City purchased six acres of properties, cleared the site, consolidated the parcels, sold the land to the Library System and SHAG developer, and reconstructed a block of South 144th Street. Construction of the development is now complete.

Council actions look toward better future

2021 Councilmembers Seal, Hougardy, Quinn, McLeod, Delostrinos-Johnson, Idan and Council President Kate Kruller completed another year of collaborative hard work. Under the unusual conditions of virtual meetings, they tackled tough policy matters and navigated the City through the ongoing pandemic emergency.

The City Council held 19 Regular, 23 Committee of the Whole, 14 Special, and 73 Committee meetings, all while members also represented the City on 29 regional boards.



Legislative highlights from the year include:

- Adopted a revised and comprehensive new City Council Rules of Procedure
- Authorized formation of a new “Future of Fire/EMS Services Community Advisory Committee” to study financial sustainability of fire service
- Passed a resolution recognizing the new statewide protections for residential tenants impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Signed on to the Regional Coordination Framework for Disasters and Planned Events
- Authorized a Teen and Senior Center Programming and Feasibility Study
- Determined use of the American Rescue Plan Act funding for COVID-19 recovery

In December the City Council honored outgoing Tukwila Councilmembers Verna Seal and Zak Idan with resolutions of appreciation and ceremonial keys to the city. The City of Tukwila thanks Ms. Seal for sixteen years and Mr. Idan for four years of dedicated service.

2022 application for City of Opportunity Scholarship is now available

Since 2014, the City of Tukwila has offered a scholarship program for high school students living in Tukwila. Its purpose: to help deserving students continue their education beyond high school by providing financial assistance and opportunity. We are currently accepting applications from those enrolled for undergraduate study in community colleges, colleges, trade schools and universities.

Selection criteria include residency in Tukwila, academic accomplishments, community service, references, financial need, and personal essay. To see the complete list of eligibility requirements and to download the application, go to TukwilaWA.gov/scholarship. The deadline to submit scholarship applications is March 31, 2022. For more information, contact executive assistant Cheryl Thompson at Cheryl.Thompson@TukwilaWA.gov or 206-433-1850.



In challenging times, Finance Department keeps its eyes on best uses of City funds

During 2021, the Finance Department continued working to project the City’s revenue picture as affected by Covid-19.

The federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provides relief funds to state, local and tribal governments that have been negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Tukwila received approximately \$5.7 million in ARPA funding. The Finance Department provided the City Council with detailed analysis of appropriate use of ARPA funds, along with possible programs that could best utilize the funds to benefit the Tukwila community.

Moving forward from its long-time financial system, the Department configured Phase 1 of a new Enterprise Resource Planning system – an integrated business software to manage multiple functions. Phase 1 includes general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and cashiering for some transactions; future phases will include payroll and utility billing.

Besides significantly improved reporting capabilities, the new system will provide the City long-term savings, with streamlined and paperless processes.

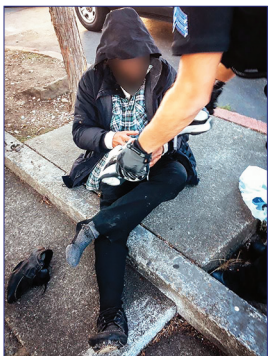
Police officers deliver over-and-above service to the Tukwila community



Seven Tukwila police officers received life saving awards; five received certificates of commendation, one received medal of valor and one received meritorious service. They were all recognized for their efforts in saving the lives of the community members they serve.

These life-saving efforts included officers responding to a residence where one of the tenants was approaching other tenants with a knife and threatening to kill them. Relying on their training and experience, the officers remained calm and professional, detaining the male without incident getting him the help that he needed. In another incident, officers saved the lives of three individuals with life-threatening injuries that were hit by rifle fire. Another life-saving effort occurred when an officer found a wounded male unconscious, and applied a tourniquet to the man's nearly-amputated arm to stop any further hemorrhaging. Three officers went above and beyond to perform medical aid to a gunshot wound victim, saving the life of a 39 year-old man. A SWAT officer put himself in a position of great danger, rescuing a 20-month-old child caught in the middle of a domestic violence situation where the father strangled the mother and dangled the child.

Officers made a routine habit of talking to Tukwila's unhoused community and on many occasions providing them with water, coffee and food. The Community Police Team contacted an ever-growing number of homeless individuals in the community. They have housed several individuals and abated several unsafe encampments.



Tukwila officers and King County deputies donated more than 50 pairs of boots to those in need, which were distributed by the Tukwila Food Pantry.



Staying in touch with the community

Discussion began in 2020 regarding a Tukwila Teen and Senior Center (TTSC). In 2021 City staff conducted engagement efforts with the Tukwila community to understand their visions for the center. Community Engagement will continue throughout the site selection and programming process until final development. TukwilaWA.gov/TTSC

The former Community Connectors Program was reframed as the City of Tukwila's Community Leadership Initiative. Engagement efforts began in April of 2021, meeting with various community-based organizations, former Community Connector participants and committee members and more. Currently in its final planning stages, the Community Leadership Initiative will launch in spring of 2022.

Regarding the 42nd Avenue bridge, the City engaged with the Allentown Advocates. City staff, including the Public Works Department, will continue to involve residents of Allentown with monthly updates and discussion.

The City's communications with the public still defer to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Through its website, social media platforms Facebook and Twitter, the Hazelnut and other mailings, Tukwila continues to provide important information to its residents, community members, businesses and guests. The Washington State Department of Health and King County Public Health websites offer great Covid resources as well.

Serving Tukwila residents in need

In 2021, many Tukwila residents experienced significant financial impacts due to wage loss caused by the ongoing effects of COVID-19. During the 2021 budget review, City Councilmembers allocated an additional, one-time increase in assistance funds of \$250,000 for the Human Services program.

With the guidance of the Human Services Advisory Board, staff was able to identify unmet needs surrounding housing stabilization (rent/utility assistance), non-profit partners serving Tukwila residents in unprecedented numbers (food pantry, tenant rights, medical care), and temporary part-time staff specifically focused on assisting COVID-impacted households. Compared to pre-COVID data, in 2021, total calls for assistance increased by 22%, calls for rent/utility support increased by 57%.



Technology and Innovation Services (TIS) kept the City functioning and communicating



Supporting the City's technology, TIS staff remained engaged enhancing security, enabling self-service, supporting cloud services, and maintaining a high level of one-on-one user support for staff.

TIS addressed the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic by setting up technology on-site, off-site, and everywhere in-between in 2021. Technology support was provided for critical City services in terms of enabling hybrid physical/remote attendees at meetings of Tukwila's Municipal Court, City Council and Committee meetings, and City staff.

A build-out of the Emergency Operations HAM Radio infrastructure brings more resilient communications infrastructure during any potential catastrophic event.



Legacy servers were transitioned to virtual computers to increase resiliency, speed and performance of City services were realized by modernizing the City's virtual server and on-premise storage area network.

TIS worked with the Community Development Department to update City requirements as related to Small Cell Wireless and permitting. Design standards bring Tukwila's code into the current era of wireless infrastructure permitting. Other important government database applications were upgraded, including online permitting services, fleet asset management, and employee performance software.

Migration to a Cloud PBX enabled the City to terminate service on aging analog phone and fax devices.

City Clerk's Office keeps meetings going, records accessible

As pandemic impacts rolled over into 2021, the City Clerk's Office continued to provide services both in person and virtually. New policies, resulting from pandemic operations and new technologies, were developed for managing records. These include COVID monitoring data and vaccination status verification records, voicemail, and content stored in the Microsoft Teams communication/collaboration platform.

Fulfilling public records requests continues to be a large part of the work in every City department. An annual report of metrics –mandated by the State – showed that in 2021 the amount of City staff time spent processing these requests increased by 100%.

The Clerk's Office initiated new projects with Public Works, Technology and Community Development to digitize as-built drawings and Kroll Map books. Used regularly by staff, digitization makes these tools easily accessible and provides long-term protection.

Everyone has access to thousands of records in the City's Digital Records Center: TukwilaWA.gov/records

With the Police Department's move to Tukwila's new Justice Center, the lower level of City Hall was repurposed for use as a Records Center, eliminating the yearly lease expense of \$109,000 for the previous off-site facility.



Community Development (DCD) works to help shape a robust community

Tukwila's Permit Center completed the transition to paperless permitting, allowing contractors to apply online for building and land use permits. This allows for safe remote services during the pandemic while saving time and paper.

A Tukwila Housing Action Plan was developed that provides recommendations for how the City can increase housing around the Tukwila International Boulevard Link Light Rail station while limiting displacement of existing residents.

Several new multifamily housing developments containing over 350 dwelling units received final inspections and are now occupied with Tukwila residents, including the Confluence, Tukwila Village Building B, and Holden Southcenter.

The first building on the Prologis site and the Dermody Oxbow Amazon distribution center add nearly 400,000 square feet of warehouse space within Tukwila's north industrial area.



Tukwila's annual Recycling Collection Event collected more than 15 tons of metals; 147 tires; 2,700 automobile, marine, and household batteries; 1.5 tons of cardboard; 8 refrigerators and freezers; and many more hard-to-recycle items.

Staff managed continued State funding for recycling assistance and outreach to Tukwila businesses, multifamily households, and more than 1,000 individuals. The Earth Day Art Contest awarded \$1,900 to Tukwila students and faculty, and the City helped 49 businesses recover \$13,200 in refunds from Waste Management for incorrect recycling charges.

The Code Enforcement division opened 139 cases in 2021, the majority of which were related to rental housing licensing and construction without required permits.

To increase the safety of Tukwila students, staff implemented a traffic safety campaign from King County's Metro SchoolPool program. Signs in multiple languages were placed along routes to schools. These signs help support the school zone camera enforcement that started in September 2021.

DCD and Parks developed the draft Tukwila Pond Master Plan, providing a conceptual design and implementation strategy to transform a neglected pond into a healthy, vibrant 25-acre greenspace in the Tukwila Urban Center.

Fire Department maintains readiness to keep community safe and healthy

Tukwila's new headquarters Fire Station 52 opened in February 2021. Engine 352, Battalion Chief 352 and Fire Administration are now housed at this location. This "state-of-the-art" fire station puts firefighter safety first.

The *Fully Involved Leadership* program was brought to the Department. Nationally known author and speaker Fire Chief Gary Ludwig presented four TEAMS meetings to all Department members. He shared his views on leadership and answered participant questions, also engaging in a valuable debrief with our Fire Chief.

Training for fire staff encompassed education on high-rise buildings, rescue, medical, truck, pumping water through the engines, and water/boat rescue.

To simplify the hiring of fire staff, fire agencies in King County have joined together in offering a firefighter exam and process that is accessible, affordable and inclusive. Tukwila Fire was a founding member of WA Fire Careers, graduating two new firefighters from the academy in June. (WAFireCareers.org)

Responses to 911 calls increased from 5,272 in 2020 to 6,847 in 2021 – a 30% increase in one year. This was due to a number of factors, including Covid-related issues, relocation of Fire Stations 51 and 52, and a new response model in King County.

Delivered through many vaccination events in the city, the Mobile Vaccination Team provided a total of 1,718 doses: first doses–624, second doses–548, and boosters–546. The Covid testing site in Tukwila conducted 100,208 tests during 2021.



Parks and Recreation offers activities and more to Tukwila community members

Tukwila Parks & Recreation Department continued its mission to offer a variety of programs in a safe and healthy manner.

Youth Programs offered Camp Tukwilly during the summer and re-established a modified after-school program. Other activities for youth were provided, from free sports camps and clinics to enrichment activities like sewing and crafting.

To keep students busy and active after a day of remote learning, Mobile Recreation distributed recreational “to go” kits. They also delivered breakfast, lunch and snack items to families dependent on school meals. The 24-week program distributed 8,731 meals and 5,104 recreational kits to Tukwila families.



The Department provided Seniors safe activities to reduce the sense of isolation, boredom and frustration. Seniors enjoyed free fitness and cultural classes, and events that

include several summer picnics, a Veteran's Day event, the 32nd annual Thanksgiving luncheon, and the 12 Days of Goodness with the Seattle Seahawks alumni coaches and players.

In-person Wellness Programming resumed classes while still offering virtual options. The year began with a limited number of fitness room appointments as well as small, safe and socially distanced in-person group fitness classes. Pickleball emerged as a popular wellness activity. Many of Tukwila's local park's tennis courts were lined for pickleball play, allowing for year-round community use.

As outdoors became the safer place to be, the rental of picnic shelters in Tukwila parks enabled people to gather while keeping safe. Foster Golf Links saw an increase in play, with more than 64,000 rounds being played in 2021. This near-record number of rounds meant increased course maintenance. Staff incorporated new equipment and techniques to allow for improved course conditions, and worked on planning for future course improvements.



The Green Tukwila Partnership is working with nine partner organizations and three Forest Steward resident groups on multiple sites across Tukwila. In 2021 there were 2,173 native trees, 4,808 native plants, and 5,000 native seeds planted throughout the park system as part of this program.

Parks Maintenance kept busy with the installation of park athletic equipment at Crystal Springs, updated the anti-slip surface at the spray park, improved the skate park with new a new ramp, and replaced aging irrigation components throughout the park system.

To combat the litter epidemic in Tukwila's parks, streets and green spaces, Adopt-A-Spot branched out from steward clean-ups, adding public volunteer events. Over the year, 188 volunteers worked 389 hours in parks, cleaning up loose litter and filling 316 bags with the trash.

The Arts-in-the-Parks mural program was launched to improve the visual vibrancy, connection, and interest to Tukwila's beautiful parks system, while supporting the local art community. This program included 10 large murals, and a 10-piece Pop Up Banner Gallery which will continue to move throughout the parks system in 2022.



In 2021 the Utility Box Art program was launched. Nine artists were selected for the pilot project which was funded through the 1% for Arts program. A large street art mural was installed at Baker Boulevard and Christensen Road as part of an ongoing art project funded by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee and the 1 % for Arts program.



Postmaster: If named addressee has moved, deliver to current resident. To help us correct addresses or eliminate duplicates, please call 206-454-7573.

Council Corner

Working together to find the best community solutions

by Thomas McLeod,
2022 Council President



Happy New Year from your City Council. I am grateful for the opportunity my fellow Councilmembers have entrusted to me, serving as Council President for 2022. This year we welcome two newly-elected Councilmembers to the dais, Mohammed Abdi and Tosh Sharp. They join their fellow Councilmembers on serving our community, including their participation on the Council's four standing committees, shown at right.

As the Legislative Branch for the City of Tukwila, the Council does a great deal of its work in these standing committees. We are starting the year with virtual meetings and will do so for the time being. Councilmembers also serve on regional boards and committees – in addition to working full-time jobs, running households, and raising families. It certainly fills a calendar, but it's with opportunities to serve the people and places we care the most about: Tukwila!

1 st & 3 rd Mondays - 5:30PM	2 nd & 4 th Mondays - 5:30PM
Transportation & Infrastructure Services <i>Kate Kruller, Chair</i> <i>Mohammed Abdi</i> <i>Tosh Sharp</i>	Finance & Governance <i>De'Sean Quinn, Chair</i> <i>Kate Kruller</i> <i>Cynthia Delostrinos-Johnson</i>
Planning & Community Development <i>Cynthia Delostrinos-Johnson, Chair</i> <i>Kathy Hougardy</i> <i>De'Sean Quinn</i>	Community Services & Safety <i>Kathy Hougardy, Chair</i> <i>Mohammed Abdi</i> <i>Tosh Sharp</i>

With its great passion for this city, your Council is working hard in areas of *public safety, affordable housing, roads, infrastructure, equity, diversity and economic development*, to name a few. But we cannot do all this alone. We need the collaborative efforts of City staff, residents, the business community and other stakeholders to shape Tukwila into the thriving community we all envision it to be. Personally, I've always envisioned Tukwila's potential to be the straw that stirs the south-end drink. So, let's raise a glass to 2022 and, on behalf of the Council, we look forward to a year of collaboration and success in serving you.

TUKWILA CITY HALL

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E-mail: Tukwila@TukwilaWA.gov
Website: TukwilaWA.gov

MAYOR Allan Ekberg..206-433-1850

Mayor's Office

Administration Offices..... 206-433-1850
David Cline, *City Administrator*....206-433-1851
Economic Development 206-433-1832

Administrative Services

Rachel Bianchi, *Dep. City Adm*..... 206-396-0341
City Clerk's Office..... 206-433-1800
Human Resources – Personnel ...206-433-1831
City Job Line..... 206-433-1828
Human Services206-433-7181
Community Engagement 206-454-7564
Technology Services..... 206-454-7575

Community Development Dept.

Nora Gierloff, *Director*.....206-431-3670
Code Enforcement206-431-3682

Finance Department

Vicky Carlsen, *Director*..... 206-433-1835

Fire Department

Jay Wittwer, *Chief*.....206-575-4404

Parks/Recreation Department

Tracy Gallaway, *Director*206-767-2342

Police Department

Eric Drever, *Chief*206-433-7175
Mindi Mattson, *Emergency Mgr*...206-971-8750

Public Works Department

Hari Ponnekanti, *Director*..... 206-433-0179

Emergency – Fire, Police 911

MUNICIPAL COURT

15005 Tukwila International Blvd 206-433-1840

TUKWILA COMMUNITY CENTER

12424 - 42nd Avenue South
Recreation Division.....206-768-2822
Senior Center/Services.....206-767-2323

FOSTER GOLF LINKS

13500 Interurban Avenue South
Pro Shop206-242-4221

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Laurel Humphrey, *Analyst* 206-433-8993

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

7:00PM in Council Chambers
Regular Meetings 1st/3rd Mondays
Committee of the Whole.....2nd/4th Mondays